

MACAULAY'S CHARACTER OF JAMES 1!

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Salisbury on Monday, the nineteenth* A battle seemed imminent. Most of the regiments in the royal army were at Warminster, where it was arranged that the King- should review them on the twenty-first, as a preliminary to advancing against William. Macaulay¹ relates how at the moment when James was about to set out for Warminster he was prevented from starting by a violent attack of bleeding at the nose, and that three days elapsed before the hemorrhage was entirely stopped. According to the f acobite legend this bleeding was providential. Churchill and his accomplices had arranged to seize the King when he got to Warminster and to hand him over to William. The story of the plot is probably a simple invention based on the fact that Churchill deserted to William. James apparently believed it, however, and Ailesbury is certain about its existence.

New authorities help us to correct Macaulay's account of events at Salisbury. There seems to be no good authority for the picturesque detail that the bleeding came on Just when James was setting out for Warminster. The Life of James distinctly says that the bleeding began * the evening before his Majesty designed to go ¹.² This is confirmed by Ailesbury, who arrived at Salisbury on November 20 to attend the King as a Gentleman of the Bedchamber* He

went to Court soon after his arrival: * The King was in his bedchamber in a great chair, his nose having bled for some time, and the moment I arrived they put a cold key on the back of his neck, and all was over/ ⁸ Nevertheless the bleeding continued the next day, and prevented the journey

'III, 1159 (ix).

²ii. 222. Abel Boyer's Reign of James II (in Ms History of King William the Third) explains the origin of the error.

³Memoirs, i. 188.